

about

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS in Fairfax County

what you need to know...

The Fairfax County Youth Survey is designed to provide information about behaviors, experiences and other factors, both positive and harmful, that influence the health and well-being of the county's youth.

Youth Survey Topics

Substance Use
Delinquent Behaviors
Bullying and Aggression
Mental Health
Sexual Health
Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition
Risk and Protective Factors

Risk factors help explain circumstances that may increase the likelihood of problem or unhealthy behaviors.

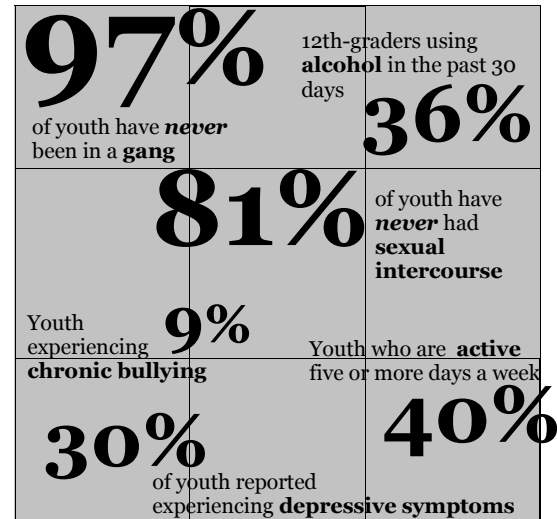
Protective factors, or assets, can help increase resiliency to problem behaviors such as drug abuse or gang involvement and are believed to buffer youth from risk.

By focusing on protective factors we foster resiliency; view youth as empowered with strengths rather than confronted by risks; and encourage nurturing young people to help them succeed.

Some protective factors:

- Opportunities to engage in community activities.
- Strong family support, enjoying time with parents or guardians.
- Positive interactions with teachers and having school-related opportunities.
- Social competencies to make good decisions about substance use or other challenges.

Fairfax County youth self-reported behavior



Youth Survey results for 8th, 10th, and 12th Graders

what can you do?

promote healthy behaviors

- Spend time with teens. Build relationships that include trust, honesty, open lines of communication, and setting limits.
- Be a good role model. Eat right, exercise, and deal with stress in healthy ways. Don't misuse alcohol, cigarettes, or medications. Don't use illegal drugs!
- Teach good values and a sense of responsibility, then trust teens to make good choices.
- Set rules and stick with them. Setting and enforcing fair rules can help avoid social settings where teens may run into peer pressure they can't handle.



Source: adapted from
www.girlshealth.gov/parents

understand, encourage, learn, and act

- Understand that it's normal for teens to want to try new things.
- Understand that angry teens may rebel by making poor choices. Turn mistakes into lessons, show you still love them, and point out the good things they do.
- Encourage and support teens' involvement in positive pro-social activities such as sports, school clubs, the arts, community service, and any activity that provides a sense of belonging.
- Encourage teens not to be ashamed of having a problem with stress, relationships, grades, weight, drugs, or alcohol, but to learn how to handle problems in healthy ways.
- Learn about teen depression and suicide; alcohol and drug abuse; bullying and dating abuse; and eating disorders that contribute to weight loss or weight gain.
- Consult with your doctor, school staff, local hospitals, or county alcohol and drug services. Read books and get information from websites on preventing and handling risk-taking behaviors. Join and support school and community coalitions.

who can help?



Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB)

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb | Entry & Referral 703-383-8500 | TTY 711
24-Hour Emergency Services 703-573-5679 | TTY 703-207-7737

Fairfax County Public Schools Intervention and Prevention Services

www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ | 571-423-4020

Fairfax County Public Schools Student Safety and Wellness Office

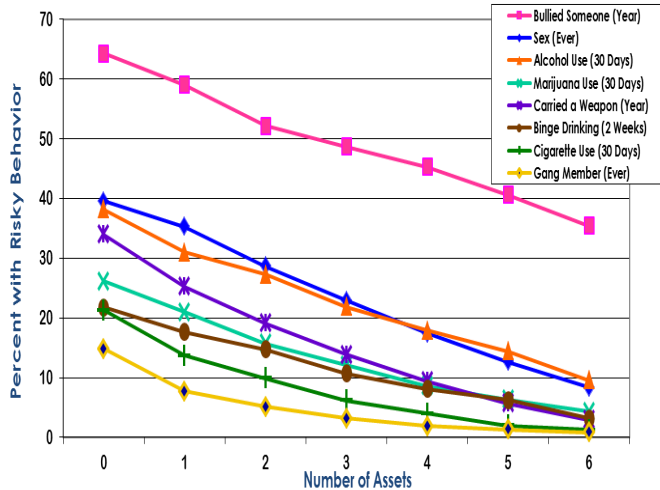
www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ssaw | 571-423-4270



Countywide Service Integration
and Planning Management

THREE TO SUCCEED

Thriving in Fairfax



Three to Succeed is based on the Youth Survey analysis that shows having **just three assets** dramatically **reduces risk behaviors** and **promotes thriving youth**.

Assets are strengths in young people, their families, friends, schools and communities that help them thrive in health, in school, in daily life, and in a safe environment. The more assets a person has, the fewer

risk behaviors they report and the Youth Survey shows that every asset makes a difference.

Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and other assets in their lives, though there are disparities that make it more challenging for some to thrive. Take action to be an asset in any young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children.

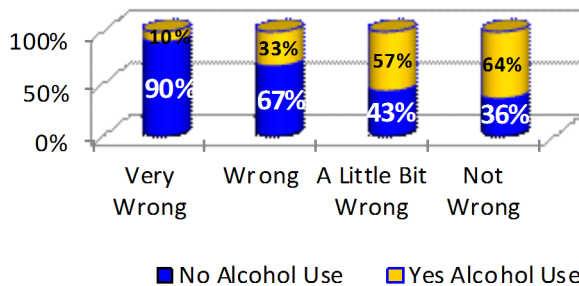
Assets

Having High Personal Integrity
Performing Community Service
Having Teachers Recognize Good Work
Having Community Adults to Talk to
Participating in Extracurricular Activities
Having Parents Available for Help

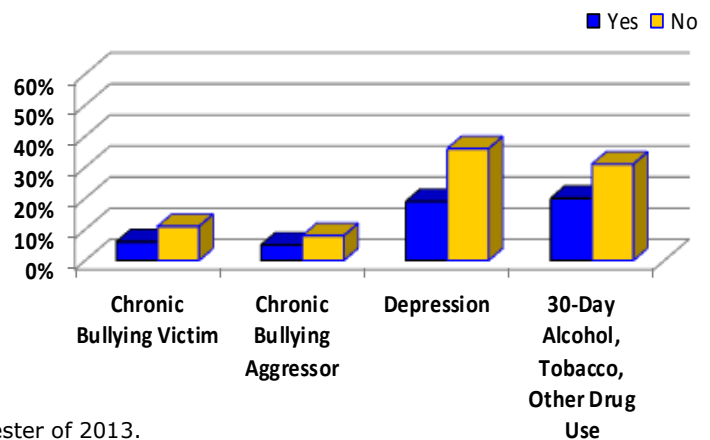
parents and community adults make a difference

What Parents Think Matters*

90% of students who thought their parents disapproved of them drinking alcohol (Very Wrong) **didn't drink**.
Only 36% of students who thought their parents were fine with them drinking (Not Wrong) **didn't drink**.



There are lots of adults in my neighborhood I could talk to about something important.



The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall semester of 2013.
*Results are from the 2012 Youth Survey.

websites for more information

Fairfax County Youth Survey www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

Fairfax County Prevention System
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention

Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County
www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org

Fairfax County Public Schools: Building Resilience
www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/resiliency/rb.shtml

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America
www.drugfree.org

National Alliance on Mental Illness
www.nami.org



A publication of Fairfax County, Va., and Fairfax County Public Schools

protective factors

Youth in Fairfax County report they

- Have opportunities to be involved in school activities (95%*), feel safe in school (86%), and have teachers who notice their good work (64%).
- Can ask parents for help (79%), have parents who often or always notice when they do a good job (61%*).
- Believe it is wrong to cheat at school (79%) or to steal (86%*), and are honest with their parents (83%).
- Regularly volunteer for community service (48%).



To request this information in an alternate format, call the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

September 2014